

Message Text

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ACTION COME-00

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 EB-07 DOTE-00 H-01 RSC-01 CU-02

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R 231444Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7690

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 0757

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: BEXP, ELTN, OEXC, NI

SUBJECT: MAJOR PROJECT: RAILROAD DEVELOPMENT:

NZEGWU VISIT

REF: LAGOS 11832 AND PREVIOUS

1. IN VIEW DIFFICULTIES WE ARE EXPERIENCING IN DEALINGS WITH MEA ON NUMBER OF UNRELATED ISSUES, EMBASSY HAS RE-CONSIDERED PLANNED APPROACH TO MEA RE NZEGWU VISIT MENTIONED IN REFTEL. EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT SUCH APPROACH TO MINISTRY VERY LIKELY TO PROVOKE POLITE TURNDOWN WHICH WOULD THEN FORECLOSE OPTION OF PRIVATE SECTOR INVITATION.

2. TO AVOID THIS RISK, EMBASSY PROPOSES REVERT TO SUGGESTION ADVANCED IN LAGOS 11589 THAT APPROPRIATE PRIVATE RAILWAY ASSOCIATION (SUCH AS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN RAILROADS) ACT AS SPONSOR FOR VISIT. AS WAS PERHAPS NOT ENTIRELY CLEAR IN THAT MESSAGE, EMBASSY IS PREPARED TO FUND ENTIRE PROGRAM FROM CU ALLOCATION IF NECESSARY, SO THAT PROBLEMS EN-VISAGED PARA 2 STATE 281027 COULD HOPEFULLY BE OVERCOME. TO EXTENT THAT INDIVIDUAL FIRMS ARE WILLING PROVIDE DOMESTIC TRANSPORTATION AND ACCOMMODATIONS, THUS REDUCING CHARGE TO EMBASSY'S CU BUDGET, THIS WOULD OF COURSE BE WELCOME BUT IS NOT ESSENTIAL PREREQUISITE FOR PLANNING TRIP.

3. MOST IMPORTANT FROM EMBASSY VIEWPOINT IS TO ENSURE
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THAT USG ROLE IN FUNDING TRIP IS KEPT ENTIRELY OUT OF PUBLIC

VIEW. PRIVATE ORGANIZATION WHICH EXTENDS INVITATION SHOULD BE PREPARED SERVE AS SPONSOR THROUGHOUT NZEGWU' STAY, AND EITHER HANDLE HIS ARRANGEMENTS DIRECTLY OR ACT AS CONTRACTOR ENGAGING PROGRAMMING AGENCY TO DO SO ON ITS BEHALF. THIS IS APPROACH WHICH CU/AF HAS PREVIOUSLY RECOMMENDED FOR INVITATIONS TO SENIOR FMG OFFICIALS.

4. PLEASE ADVISE WHETHER INVITATION CAN BE ARRANGED ON THIS BASIS. EMBASSY IS OF COURSE PREPARED TO TRANSMIT INVITATION FROM SPONSOR AND TO MAKE NECESSARY ARRANGEMENTS AT THIS END ON SPONSOR'S BEHALF.
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